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1863-1963 ONE-HUNDRETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE

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1863-1963



One-hundredth Anniversary

of the

Presbyterian Church

Middle Point, Ohio

HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE POINT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In the summer of the year 1863, except for Morgan's raid through southern Ohio, the Civil War seemed far away to the farmers who were busy clearing the land and building farms in the rich country of north-western Ohio. But occasionally word came through of the death of some relative or friend on the battle field. The need for comfort in such times of sorrow, and the natural religious inclinations of the people led them to band themselves together in small scattered churches which were in most part supplied by circuit riders. One such small church, organized in 1863, met in Ridge Township hall, on the northwest corner of the first cross roads east of where the Lincolnview High School now stands. This group was known as the Highland Presbyterian Church. The names of the original members of this church and the name of the minister who organized it have been lost in the passage of time except for three elders who continued to serve for 30 or 40 years: Jacob Lepley, Lewis Frager, and Asa Pollock. But what they began back there 100 years ago finds its repercussions in the life of Middle Point today. For as the years passed, God blessed those pioneers and the church prospered.

In 1873 the church had grown to the point where the Grange Hall would no longer accommodate the congregation, so a meeting was called to discuss the object of erecting a building of their own. On December 11, 1873, a building committee, composed of Robert Pollock, Shannon Lybarger, Lewis Frager, James R. Crooks and John McCoy, was appointed, their duties being to pick a site and erect a church thereon. The committee chose a location in the village of Middle Point, and bought two lots from Jeremiah Perry for the sum of \$40.00. By March 28, 1874, a frame building had been erected on the lots in Middle Point, and the first service of worship was held there on that day. At a congregational meeting on the same day, the name of the church was officially changed from Highland Presbyterian Church to the First Presbyterian Church of Middle Point and the Rev. William Fuller of Van Wert was called as pastor.

But this was not the end of the growth of the young church. Sunday by Sunday, month by month, year by year, it grew and progressed under the guidance and with the backing of spiritual men and women. As the church grew, it came to the place where it could call its own pastor, rather than depend on the pastors of a circuit. So it was in 1892 that the present manse was built to accommodate the pastor and his family. In the year 1910, it again became evident to many leaders of the church that another larger building was needed to house the increasing congregation. The following year the corner stone of a fine brick church was laid, and the beautiful building which today is one of the distinguished landmarks of Middle Point, was built. The old frame building was sold to N. P. White who erected it on his farm southwest of Middle Point. It still stands as part of the barn. The bell from the old church was bought by Evan T. Davies, who presented it to the mission station at Linchow, now Linshien, China.

From 1911 to this present date, the congregation of the church has not increased greatly in size, but it has continued to grow in spirit and unity. In 1935, when Reverend Tom Fred Campbell was pastor, a fine pipe organ was installed and the following year, Reverend Campbell presented a set of chimes to the church. The musical facilities of the church

were completed in 1946, when a fine chimes loud speaker system was presented to the church by the congregation in honor of the men who served in the last war.

During the years, many ministers have served in this little church, and each has brought contribution in spirit, and in turn has received a blessing from working here. Those men who have pastored here are as follows: Rev. William Fuller, Rev. Scott, Rev. Sherard, Rev. Harvey Wilson, Rev. D. Evans Jones, Rev. John Todd, Rev. Lyman Hanna, Rev. J. E. Hartman, Rev. D. S. Strawman, Rev. William Surdival, Rev. Russel H. Woltz, Rev. Fred J. Petersen, Rev. Thomas Fred Campbell, Rev. O. L. Willits, Rev. Malcolm B. Koehler, Rev. Philip W. Bembower, Rev. A. P. Kinney, Rev. Oswald Schwalbe, Rev. James Corry.



Rev. and Mrs. William Surdival

HISTORY OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Missionary Society of the First Presbyterian Church of Middle Point, Ohio was organized for the first time during the pastorate of the Rev. William Fuller in 1874. The church then worshipped in a white frame structure which was located on the same site as the present brick church. We regret that we have no records of the activities or of the officers of that first early group.

During the pastorate of the Rev. D. Evans Jones in the year 1899 we find an active Missionary Society, with Miss Jennie Morgan, President, Miss Nora Williams, Secretary and Mrs. P. S. Morgan, Treasurer.

The Missionary Society was changed to a Ladies Aid Society during the pastorate of Rev. John Todd in the years 1900-1902, when funds were needed to carry on local church work.

The reorganization of the Missionary Society took place on Nov. 13, 1918, at the home of Rev. and Mrs. William Surdival, during the regular meeting of the Aid Society. The two groups met together with the same officers serving both the Missionary and Aid Societies until June 1919, when it was decided that they separate and meet as two separate societies.

The official Missionary Society records for the two years 1919-20 and 1920-21 have not been located. However, from the minutes of the Session we find that Mrs. Gertrude Jones reported at the annual meeting of the Church that the Missionary Society was meeting regularly, and fulfilling its obligations. The Church record also shows that the Missionary Society took the responsibility for conducting the weekly prayer service for the church.

During the next twenty years 1922-1942, we have complete records of the meetings and activities of the Society. The minutes of these meetings show well planned programs for group study of the regular home and foreign missions topics. The books also show that the Society met its financial obligations to the missionary work regularly and faithfully. Five pastors served the church and worked with the group during this period: 1914-1923, Rev. William Surdival; 1923-1925 Rev. Russel Woltz; 1926-1928 Rev. F. J. Petersen- 1928-1939; Rev T. F. Campbell pastor, Rev. O. L. Willits, who began his work here in 1939. During the present pastorate in the year 1940, the two women's organizations i. e., Aid and Missionary Society, banded together as one group under the name of the Presbyterian Guild.

The membership during the past twenty years has remained about the same in number. In 1924 there were approximately seventy women in the parish with an actual figure of fifty active members on the roll of the Missionary Society. At the present time we have seventy-seven women in the parish, and fifty-seven actively contributing toward the support of the Guild. Our average attendance during the past year at regular meetings was twenty; however, about thirty-five women attended and took part in meetings sometime during the year.

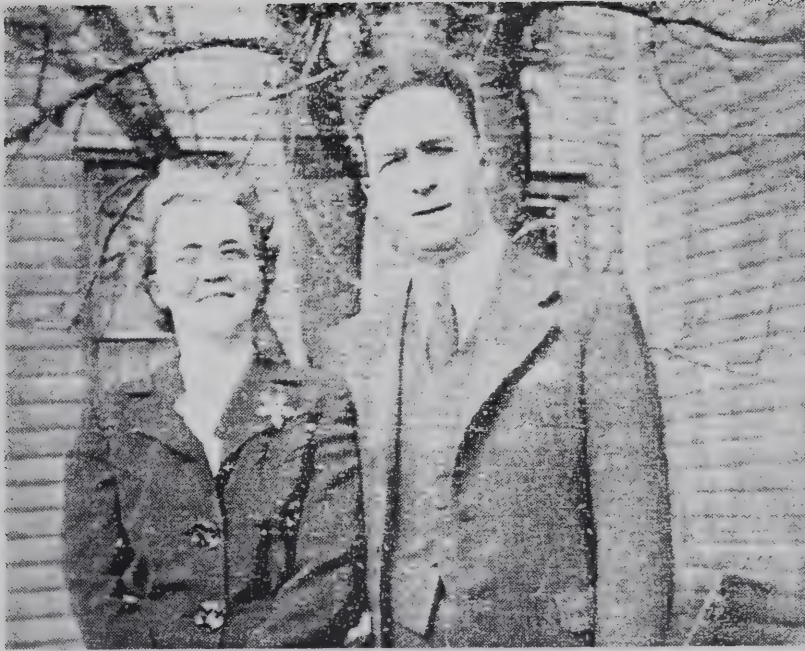
We, the Committee, used this history which was compiled in 1942 with the help of Mrs. John Ringwald who dated her membership back to the year of 1899 of which year we have first official record.

At the present time, 1963, the membership is fifty-nine. The women are actively associated with the National Organization of the United Presbyterian Women and United Church Women.

*From a printed program in possession of Mrs. John Ringwald, showing group activities during 1899.

ELDERS

Lewis Frager, Jacob Lepley and Asa Pollock—June 24, 1863; R. P. Pollock—1886, P. S. Morgan—1898; C. I. Blosser, H. W. Owen—1894; William S. Jones—1898; Henry and Chas. Showalter—1901; T. C. Lepley—1906; Dr. S. A. Edwards—1913; J. H. Distler—1913; Howard Oglesbee, C. F. Eversole; J. R. Davies, Fred Straley, Hanson Hinebaugh, S. Alpha McGee, Dale Wortman, Charles Longwell, Clifford Summersett, Lester Ritchie, C. L. Bucholtz, Dr. Wilbur Beach, Dale Pollock, Pryse Johnson, James Zirkle, Chester Wortman, Eldon McGee, J. Arthur Ringwald, Chas. Elder, Don Strawn, Irene Ringwald, Margaret Dolbey, C. A. Ringwald Jr., C. R. Showalter, Edith Ringwald, Grace Alice McGee, Robert Dolbey, and C. A. Ringwald Sr.



Rev. and Mrs. Malcolm Koehler



Rev. D. Evans Jones and family

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Entries from the earliest available record book of the Sunday School.
April 25, 1875

Rev. Fuller	Pastor
John Ward	Superintendent
George Fairfield	Assn't Superintendent
J. R. Crooks	Secretary
Benjamin Fisher	Chorister

September 2, 1875

Sabbath School opened with prayer by Rev. Fuller and singing by the school. Number of scholars present 40. Number of verses committed on the word "death" was three. Penny collections-\$22. Closed by singing "Tell Me The Old, Old Story."

Entry—February 8, 1880

Presbyterian Sabbath School of Middle Point met and opened by the superintendent, T. Addison, by reading, prayer and singing by the school.

The officers present were 3, teachers 4, and scholars 36, making the total of 43. Penny collections were \$11.

Sunday School members and teachers total 123 for the year of 1963.



Rev. and Mrs. Philip Bembow and family

MEMOS OF PASTORS

Rev. Fred J. Petersen was called direct from Seminary—ordained and installed May 3, 1926 and served until 1927. Thirty-two adults and children were baptized. He came here a bachelor and shortly after his arrival married Beulah Helm.

Rev. Fred Campbell served as pastor Jan. 31, 1928-1939. During his time here the organ and chimes were installed. He was active in all kinds of youth work in the church and community, Christian Endeavor, Boy Scouts, etc.

Rev. O. L. Willits—July, 1939-April 30, 1942. Sixteen children and adults were baptized. The service of communion for the shut-in members was conscientiously administered during his years of service here. An anonymous giver made it possible to purchase choir robes.

Rev. Malcolm B. Koehler—Nov. 1942-Dec. 1946. Thirteen children and adults were baptized. Hardwood floors were laid at the manse. The entire sanctuary floor was refinished. New rest rooms were installed—also new lights in the sanctuary.

Rev. Philip Bembower—Sept. 1947-May 1950. Twenty adults and children were baptized and four weddings took place. A new furnace was installed at the manse. Rev. Bembower made many pastoral calls and worked with all ages of the youth of our church.

Rev. A. P. Kinney—October 1950-October 1953. Ten infants and adults were baptized. Rev. Kinney's ability as a worker with wood was displayed in many ways. We have the pulpit, the church school class rooms, the upper cupboards at the manse, the new cement floor in the barn and many other improvements including the furnace. Twenty-one new members joined the church.

Dr. Oswald Schwalbe—1954-May 1958. During Rev. Schwalbe's service here the sanctuary was redecorated, carpet laid, and storm windows to protect the art glass window that cannot be replaced was installed. During this time the major roof repair on the manse and the church was done. The first women Elders were elected in 1956, namely: Mrs. Irene Ringwald and Miss Margaret Doble. There were eleven new members.

Rev. James Corry came to us from Kenton, June 1, 1959. Rev. and Mrs. Corry have four children—James, David, Thomas and Miriam. Eighteen adults and children have been baptized, twenty-six new members have joined the church, and there have been five weddings. A new chimney was built at the manse in preparation for Rev. Corry.

God has blessed the First Presbyterian Church of Middle Point down through the years. Let us therefore give thanks and continue to put our trust in him who is "Our God, our help, in ages past, our Hope for years to come".

TAKEN FROM THE DELPHOS HERALD FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Rev. and Mrs. Otis Harter attended a banquet at the Presbyterian church in Middle Point to honor the Rev. William Surdival D.D., who leaves soon for Pittsburgh, Pa. On behalf of the Middle Point congregation, Rev. Harter presented the Rev. Surdival with a large leather rocker. Dr. Surdival is called to an important work as manager and traveling lecturer for the National Druid Society with headquarters at Pittsburgh, Pa.



Rev. and Mrs. Fred Petersen and family

MEMORIAL GIFTS

In memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jones, Mrs. Orpha Jones Shuman presented the church with brass vases.

In memory of her husband, L. Edgar Clawson, Mrs. Mabel Clawson presented the church with the cross.

In memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Newton Jones, Mrs. Katheryn Rassicotte presented a gift of money which was used to purchase offering plates and communion service² and the baptismal font was resilvered.

OTHER GIFTS

A Christian Education Fund has been established from a number of memorial gifts that now total \$47.67. It is available to be used as a scholarship fund by any member of the church studying for a church vocation.

Mrs. Stelia Eversole Kesler in her will bequeathed \$1000.00. This was used to help finance the installation of a new kitchen.

John Davies bequeathed \$500.00. This was used in building the new Sunday School Classrooms.

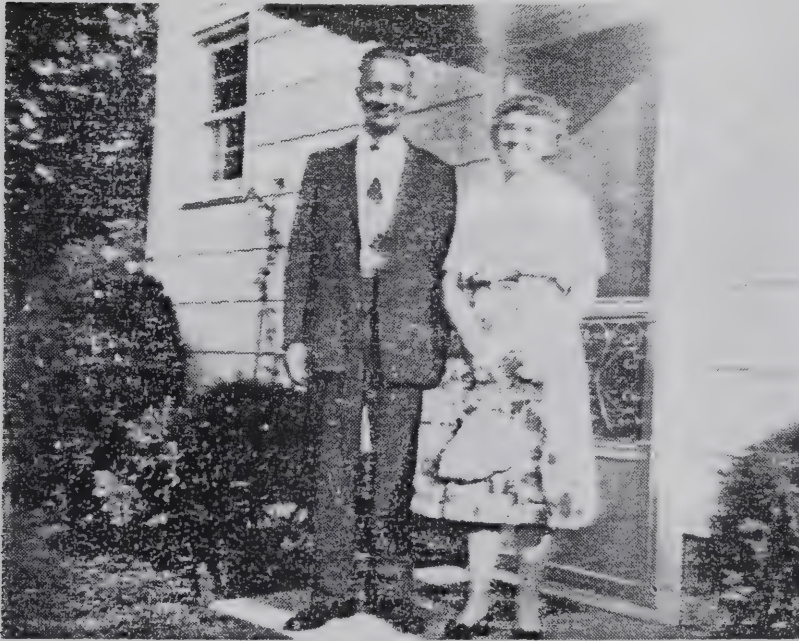
Charles Longwell bequeathed \$100.00 to the church.

Mrs. Bertha Stoves gave \$50.00 to the redecorating fund.

Albert Straley, son of Fred and Martha Straley, attended our church in his youth. He served in the armed forces and there he became aware of the need of Christian ministry. He received his training for the ministry at North Central College at Naperville, Illinois and Bonebrake Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. He is now pastor of the Bethel and Wood Chapel churches.

Miss Edith Ringwald has been our organist for approximately forty years.

*The former communion service was sent to Rev. John Zombo, Cameroun, West Africa.



Rev. and Mrs. Oswald Schwalbe

CHAPEL WINDOWS

We are proud of the windows of our church. To preserve them, storm glass was installed.

PRESENTED BY OR IN MEMORY OF

NORTH WINDOW*

Asa Pollock, Robert and Jinetta Pollock, William and Lydia Emery Asa Pollock [born 1823] and the Father of eleven children. He was grandchildren of Hazel Summersett, Ernest Pollock, J. K. Pollock, Dwayne Pollock, Everett Pollock, Arlo Pollock. All members of this church at this time.

ROBERTA & JINETTA POLLOCK. Parents of Mae Pollock Timbers, Van Wert, Ohio R. R. and Noah and Ed Pollock of Michigan.

WILLIAM & LYDIA EMERY. Grandparents of Ethel Jones, Uileta Wortman, Montez, Clod, James and Rad Emery.

WEST WINDOW*

JACOB & ELEANOR LEPLEY. Grandparents of Allie Hickman Fast and Eleanor Callahan Faller both of Van Wert, Ohio.

SOUTH WINDOW*

LEWIS & SYDNEY FRAGER, WILLIAM & DRUSILLA POLLOCK, JONATHAN G. COOMBS.

LEWIS & SYDNEY FRAGER. Parents of Wesley, Melinda and Louisa Melinda was the mother of Howard Oglesbee, Orion Oglesbee and Dora Welker. Melinda's second marriage was to Jerry Ross. Louisa was married to a Mr. Judd.

WILLIAM & DRUSILLA POLLOCK *Grandparents of Cora Lehman, Bessie and Arthur Pollock.

JONATHAN G. COOMBS. Father of Alice Miller, Leda, Ordie, Thelma and Harry Coombs.

EAST WINDOWS*

EVAN T. & ELIZABETH ANN DAVIES, *PEARL H. SWANDER, THOMAS POLLOCK & GORDON POLLOCK.

EVANS T. & ELIZABETH ANN DAVIES. Grandparents of Mary Davies Wortman and Herbert Davies.

PEARL SWANDER. Son of John and Cora Swander.

THOMAS AND GORDON POLLOCK. Father and brother of Walter Pollock.

NORTH WINDOW*

G. M. AND M. A. ROUSH AND CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SOCIETY
G. M. AND M. A. ROUSH. Grandparents of Grace Roush Kensler and Edith Roush Kerns of Van Wert, Ohio.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SOCIETY*

PROGRAM OF THE DEDICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, July 7th, 1912

Middle Point, Ohio

—Rev. D. Evans Jones, Pastor

PROGRAM

Sunday Morning, 8:30 o'clock

Official meeting of the Elders, Trustees and Building Committee, Rev. W. H. Houston, Leader.

10:00 a. m. ----- Devotional Services

Music ----- Church Choir

Sermon ----- by Rev. Walter H. Houston of Columbus, Ohio

Anthem ----- Venedocia Presbyterian Choir

Mr. R. F. Evans, Leader

Dinner

Served by the ladies of the Church, in the dining room of the church.

Afternoon

2:00 p. m. ----- Devotional Services

led by Rev. J. A. Gordon, D.D. of Van Wert, Ohio

Music ----- Salem Church Choir of Venedocia

Prof. James H. Jones, Leader

Short Address ----- Rev. Otis Harter of Delphos, O.

Short Address ----- by Rev. J. A. Gordon of Van Wert, Ohio

Anthem ----- by the Salem Church Choir

Dedication of the Church

Sermon ----- by Rev. W. J. Dempster, D.D. of Lima, Ohio

Benediction

Supper

Served by the Ladies of the Church

Evening

7:00 to 8:00 p. m. ----- Devotional Exercises

led by Rev. J. H. Kunert

Anthem ----- Salem Church Choir

Sermon ----- Rev. S. H. Houston

Benediction



Rev. Tom Fred Campbell and Dale Wortman

ONE-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OBSERVANCE
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1963

Church School 9:45 A. M.

Worship Service 11:00 A. M.

Prelude

Call To Worship

Hymn "All People That On Earth Do Dwell" No. 1

Invocation

Responsive Reading No. 45 Psalm 121, 122

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" No. 104

Offering

Doxology

Prayer Of Dedication

Choral Selection Youth Choir

Lesson Matthew 25:34-46

Sermon "The Witnessing Church" Rev. Arthur P. Kinney
Pastor of 1950-1953

Hymn "Our God, Our Help In Ages Past" No. 77

Benediction

Postlude

Basket Dinner 12:30 P. M.

Centennial Program 2:30 P. M.

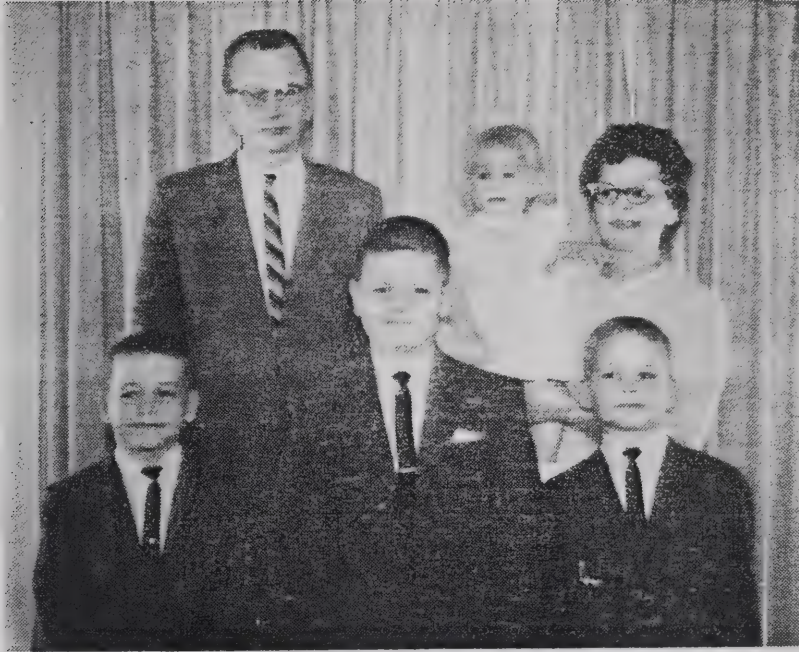
Song Service led by Mr. and Mrs. Bebb Jones

Greetings from Presbytery and Former Pastors

Solo -- "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked" -- Mr. Robert Swisher

Greetings from Other Churches, Friends and Former Members

Benediction



100 ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEES

General Chairmen -----	Grace McGee, Edith Ringwald
Historical -----	James Zirkle, Dr. Wilbur Beach, Mrs. Mary Evans, Arthur Ringwald, Margaret Dolbey
Program -----	Rev. Corry, James Zirkle
Invitation -----	Nora Johnson, Bernice Davies, Dorothy Pollock, Patricia Fraker, Delora Beach
Dinner -----	Jean Long, Alice Neer, Donna Pollock, Alice Miller, Irene Ringwald
Book Committee -----	Alice Neer, Nora Johnson, Bernice Davies

A FINAL NOTE

We would not feel our task done or book complete without the privilege and pleasure of herewith acknowledging the appreciation of all who kindly helped in many ways in gathering together and compiling this book.

A hand of tribute to all those gallant men and women who, through their dedication and faith in God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son, this church has come into being.

The Book Committee

